AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Please replace the paragraph spanning lines 15-19 on page 20 with the following amended paragraph:

To characterize the binding characteristics of the newly generated monoclonal antibodies, both ELISA and Western Blot techniques were applied. Two suitable monoclonal antibodies (mAb 35J22 and mAb 35J23) that exclusively recognized the 30 most ~~N-terminally~~ N-terminal amino acids of PIIINP as their binding epitopes and that allowed the sensitive detection of native PIIINP from patient samples were selected. The cell line from which the mAb 35J22 monoclonal antibody was produced was deposited with the American Type Culture Collection (ATCC) Patent Depository (10801 University Blvd., Manassas, VA 20110-2209, USA) on October 14, 2008 under the provisions of the Budapest Treaty for the International Recognition of the Deposit of Microorganisms for the Purpose of Patent Procedure. The deposit was made under the Identification Reference "Murine Hybridoma 35J22" and the ATCC has assigned the deposited cells ATCC accession number PTA-9545.

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (previously presented) A monoclonal antibody directed against an epitope within the 30 most N-terminal amino acids of the Col1 domain of human PIIINP, wherein the sequence of the 30 most N-terminal amino acids is Gln-Glu-Ala-Val-Glu-Gly-Gly-Cys-Ser-His-Leu-Gly-Gln-Ser-Tyr-Ala-Asp-Arg-Asp-Val-Trp-Lys-Pro-Glu-Pro-Cys-Gln-Ile-Cys-Val (amino acids 25 to 54 of SEQ ID NO 2).

2. (previously presented) The monoclonal antibody according to claim 1, wherein the antibody is characterized by preferentially binding to trimeric PIIINP as compared to monomeric col1 domain.

3-5. (canceled)

6. (currently amended) A monoclonal antibody produced from the mAb 35J22 cell line (ATCC PTA-9545).

7. (canceled)

8. (currently amended) A ~~sandwich immunoassay comprising a first antibody bound to a support and a second antibody that recognizes trimeric PIIINP, wherein said first antibody is a~~ monoclonal antibody bound to a support; said monoclonal antibody being directed against an epitope within the 30 most N-terminal amino acids of the Col1 domain of human PIIINP, the sequence of the 30 most N-terminal amino acids being Gln-Glu-Ala-Val-Glu-Gly-Gly-Cys-Ser-His-Leu-Gly-Gln-Ser-Tyr-Ala-Asp-Arg-Asp-Val-Trp-Lys-Pro-Glu-Pro-Cys-Gln-Ile-Cys-Val (amino acids 25 to 54 of SEQ ID NO 2).

9. (currently amended) A ~~sandwich immunoassay comprising a first antibody bound to a support and a second antibody that recognizes trimeric PIIINP, wherein the first antibody is a~~ monoclonal antibody produced from the mAb 35J22 cell line (ATCC PTA-9545) ~~or mAb 35J23 cell line~~ bound to a support.

10. (canceled)